

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Gilbert Grosvenor, November 2, 1906

394 November 2, 1906. Mr. Gilbert H. Grosvenor, 1328 18th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. Dear Bert:—

Your note of October 29th received, together with copy of letter from my mother, the envelope of which is dated February 8, 1866, and copy of note from my father dated, February 14, 1866.

I was glad to see these notes as these matters to which they related had past entirely from my mind. My mother's note recalls the fact that in 1866 I had contemplated setting up for myself in Glasgow, Scotland, but that my father, and mother dissuaded me from this.

The documentary evidence you have forwarded here enables us to fix definitely certain dates.

1. I went to London to live with my grandfather about October 1862 when I was 15 years of age see letter from my father 1862 (not 14 as I had supposed), and this renders it probable also that I graduated from the Royal High School when I was 15 not 14.

2. The letters from my father and mother (which I return) show that I was a teacher of elocution and music in Elgin in February 1866.)

Age. Years. 15 1862 Left Royal High School and went to London to live with grandfather. 16 1863 Returned to Edinburgh Living at home. [??] 17 1864 In Elgin as Pupil Teacher. 18 1865 At Edinburgh University, Attending lectures on Latin and Greek. 2 395 19 1866 In Elgin as Teacher of Elocution and Music. 20 1867 In Bath, England, as Teacher in Somersetshire College This I think is the year when my brother Edward died. Matriculated at London University. 21 1868 In London as my Father's assistant, although it maybe possible that I remained in Bath during this year. I am not sure now. [??] 22 1869 In

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London as my father's assistant and for a portion of the year in Edinburgh looking after my brother Melville's profession as he was ill and required a vacation in the country. 23 1870
In London as my father's assistant. Called to Edinburgh to take my brother Melville's place. Found him dying. He died in London, and we all left for Canada landing in Quebec about August 1. From there proceeded to Paris, Ontario for about a week, and then to Brantford, Ontario where my father purchased the property at Tutelo Heights.

I was 15 years old on the 3rd of March 1862, and did not go to London until October of that year. It is possible therefore that my Speaking-Machine may have been made in 1862 before I went to London. On the other hand my recollection is that I went to London very shortly after graduating from the Royal High School so that there would hardly have been time for the construction of the Speaking-Machine business Examination, school- , visit to London. It is more probable that it was made in 1863 after my return to Edinburgh from London, when I was 16 years of age, and it is very likely that my visit to Sir Charles Wheatstone with my father took place in London in that year 1863 before I returned to Edinburgh, and that this visit was the cause of the attempt to make a Speaking-Machine.

My attempt to teach a dog to speak was made while I was acting as my father's assistant in London which makes the date 3 396 1868–1870.

My thoughts are so occupied with Laboratory matters that I am very much afraid you won't be able to get any further "recollections" from me while here. If the spirit moves me, as the Quakers say, I will write of Elgin, Bath, and Miss Susana Hull.

I have just entered into a contract with Mr. Baldwin to upon Beinn Breagh an 80 foot Lookout Tower, illustrating the Cathedral Construction as applied to large structures. He has made a model of the proposed Tower which looks very fine.

Yours sincerely, Alexander Graham Bell